Heraclitus Ridens:

AT

A Dialogue between Jeſt and Earneſt, concerning the Times.

Tueſday, October the 11th. 1681.

Jeſt. STAND clear, Ho!

Earn. Why? what's the matter?

Jeſt. We ſhall have a Broadſide preſently; did not you hear the *Warning-piece* go off?

Earn. Oh! that was only loaden with Conſcience Caſe-ſhot for the *Iriſh* Evidence, *A Charge to the Jury*, without fear, favour or affection to *ſave* their *Conſciences* by damming their Souls, Bodies, and Eſtates.

Jeſt. A very pretty compendious Method! why, I thought it had belonged to the Judges only to give Charges to the Juries; and that for other perſons to tamper with them had been *Embracery:*

Earn. The truth on't is, there has been ſuch an old fooliſh Cuſtom, and to put the Jury after their Charge into a Room apart, with an Officer, who is ſworn not to permit any perſon to ſpeak with them, or they with any body. But this being in order to prevent Perjury and falſe Verdicts, is contrary to the Liberty of a *ſafe Conſcience.*

Jeſt. Now would I gladly know the difference between whiſpering a Jury in the Jury Chamber, and publickly printing and diſperſing Perſuaſives to Juries to perjure themſelves, by giving in Verdict contrary to many full and poſitive Teſtimonies upon Oath.

Earn. Why, I'le tell you, there is juſt as much difference as between ſtealing a ſheet off a Hedge in a dark Night, and Robbing upon the Kings Highway; the one is a ſneaking, the other an audacious impudent Villany.

Jeſt. Sure *Dick* has a months mind to a wooden Collar-band, to make him look a little more like the Cloven-footed Holder-forth, who was mightily taken with Collar-band-faſhion, as the ſtory ſays.

Earn. What ſtory?

Jeſt. The ſtory in *Glanvile's Book of Witches:* he tells you, that at their Conventicles, *Old Nick* always came to the Meeting-houſe habited like a dapper *Non-Con* in *Cuerpo*, black with a Collar band.

Earn. And pray, what did he teach his Whigs?

Jeſt. E'en the ſame Doctrine that *Dick* and his man *Warning-piece* teach, to perjure themſelves and damn their Souls. You know Rebellion and Witchcraft are as like as two Peaſe:

Earn. 'Tis an even lay then I find, whether Old *Rug* or Young *Rug* be the more edifying, powerful, and Soul-damning Teacher.

Jeſt. Nay, Ten to one upon Young *Rug*'s Head; the Devil's an Aſs to him, he cannot get out of his Old Road of *Solemn Leagues* and *Covenants*, like a Scrivener he muſt have Hand and Seal, or he won't deal with them: But now Young *Rug*, a cunning Cur, he'l take their honeſt word for't, and has found out a way by himſelf of going to the Devil with a *ſafe Conſcience*, which the great Block-head Old *Rug* would have been long enough before he had thought on. Do but obſerve what a Caſe of Conſcience he has found, *Whether notwithſtanding many full and poſitive Oaths of* Iriſh Papiſts, *a Proteſtant* Jury *may with a ſafe Conſcience give their Verdict contrary to the matter ſworn in the preſent buſineſs of a Presbyterian Plot?* page 2.

Earn. Me thinks this is no ſuch difficult Moot, pray what is their Oath? is it not to give a true Verdict according to their Evidence?

Jeſt. Yes, Yes, there's the miſchief on't. If they give a true Verdict, they cannot have a *ſafe Conſcience!* Oh, this *ſafe Conſcience* muſt be had, though they go to the Devil or his Deputy Young *Warning-Piece Rug* for it.

Earn. Why, look you now, if a Jury impannel'd and ſworn, do not upon a full and poſitive Evidence, find according to that Evidence, they do not give a true Verdict upon their Oath, and if they do not give a true Verdict according to their Oath, they are fully and plainly perjured, and in the high Road to the Devil; let them talk what they pleaſe of *ſafe Conſciences.*

Jeſt. Well, you may talk what you pleaſe, but we muſt reconcile *Perjury* and *Conſcience*; for thus it was in the Reign of the Saints; no man was Godly or had a *ſafe Conſcience*, but he that had by the perjury of the Covenant renounced the Oath of Allegiance, and thus it muſt be again, if ever the Well-affected Party hope to do any good on't. Oh, the Cauſe muſt not ſuffer what ever comes on't, better a thouſand Juries be perjured with a *ſafe Conſcience*, than that the Godly ſhould be found Rebels and Traytors.

Earn. But this is flat Popery and the very quinteſſence of Jeſuitiſm; but if it muſt be ſo, Young *Rug* ſhould have hugg'd his Juries with a ſhorter ſtate of the Queſtion thus: 'Not to give a Verdict according to many plain, full and 'poſitive Oaths of legal Witneſſes being Perjury; Whe-'ther notwithſtanding the many full and poſitive Oaths of 'ſuch legal Witneſſes, a Proteſtant Jury may with a *ſafe* '*Conſcience* commit the horrid ſin of wilful Perjury?

Jeſt. That is to ſay, Whether a Proteſtant Jury may with a ſafe Conſcience, make themſelves all the infamous Villains, the *Warning-piece* would have them believe the *Iriſh Papiſts* are.

Earn.

Earn. Yes, that is his meaning if he would speak out, but they have got such a trick of guilding this pill of *Damnation* with the spiritual Lacker of a *safe Conscience* and *Protestant*; Oh Sir! they swear against *Protestants*, and Juries *should once more consider what a Special Case the* L. Shaftsbury *(for Example) or any other Protestant so publickly engaged against* Popery *should be in*, if Coleman *and the Jesuits were to swear against them*, &c.

Jest. Oh Sir! but they should consider once more what a special Case the King must be in, if a second *Oliver* should be accused and sworn against by *Irish Papists*, if they must not be believed by a Jury, because they swear against a Protestant, in pretence so publickly engaged against Popery by the *Solemn League and Covenant*.

Earn. To tell you the plain truth on't, so far as I have been able to learn, there is no body swears against by L. *Shaftsbury* (for Example) for being a Protestant, or being publickly engaged against *Popery*; I never heard that he was accused for being of any Religion; nor is it ever brought into an Indictment, but that such a one, ' not having the fear of God before his Eyes, [that is, *having no Religion at all*,] but being moved and seduced by the Instigation of the Devil, [as Young *Rag* here was to make Perjury a Case of Conscience,] hath falsely, subtilly, maliciously and traiterously compassed, imagined, *&c.* and sure this is no part of the Protestant Religion since the Year 1660 at least, though it was before.

Jest. For Gods sake what do you talk to a sort of men that make Perjury a matter of Conscience? Don't you see how Young *Rag* lays about him in order to the preservation of his Majesty and the Government? Don't you see what a *Deference* he has for the *English* Nobility and for the *Magna Charta*?

Earn. Yes, I both see and hear his *warning-piece* murder the Reputation of all these in 20 lines, *pag.* 9. *According to the present Scheme of our Laws*, quoth he, *a Peer seems to be in a worse condition in any Criminal Change than the meanest Commoner.* So that upon the matter the Law is in as bad a Case as the *Irish* Evidence, and a Jury cannot give a Verdict according to it with a *safe Conscience*; and then for the King and Nobility, he is hooking them into a Sham Plot to make up an even *Score*; for, says he, *when a Bill is once found against a* Peer, *his Trial is by a select number of* Peers *commanded* by 25, *constituted by* Royal Commission, *against whom, though his known and professed Enemies, he is allowed no Liberty of Challenge.*

Jest. Ay, these are your *true Protestants* for you? here are your Rare Doctrines of Sanctified Perjury, and holy Scandals upon the King, Laws and Nobility, and all this to stifle a Whiggish Plot. And yet after all this noise and outcry against *Irish Papists*; what if it should happen as in *Colledge*'s Trial, that the Evidence should be *English*, and *Protestant* Evidence too?

Earn. Why, that's impossible, man, in this Case; for so soon as any person becomes an Evidence against the Whiggish Plot, he Commences a Popish Evidence at *Salamanca* or St. *Omers*, and then --

Scotch, English, Irish, French or Dutch,
Have at all.

Jest. Well, for all that, you know the late Sh. B. complained to the L. Ch. Justice, that his life was in real danger, and that some persons had offered to lay Wagers that he would be dead before *Christmas*.

Earn. Ay, mark ye me that; thereby hangs a pretty story: A very honest Gentleman being in his Company the 20. of *August* last, had a pleasant humour come into his head, hearing the Gile Cham talk tragically of Subornations and the danger *he* and all *true Protestants* were in; the Gentleman calling to mind a story of one Captain *Nichols* in *Ireland*, a blundering sort of man, he thought to put the same trick upon Mr. Sh. B.

Jest. Well, let's hear this story of the Captain.

Earn. Why, the Captain being at a Tavern with some others, one of the Company told him, he verily believed by his Countenance he would shortly be hang'd; *Nichols* taking his drollery for sober protestant Truth, replyed in some passion, he would hold him 5 *l.* of that: No, saith the the other, I'le lay you a fairer Wager, for I will give you this Guinea in hand for 5 *l.* if you are not hanged by *Michaelmas* day next. The Wager was laid, the Captain lost, paid his 5 *l.* and was soundly laugh'd at for not understanding the Trick. Now Sir, our Gentleman taking Mr. *Sh.* for such a kind of understanding Gentleman, offered him the same Wager; and this is the very foundation of that dismal Complaint at the Sessions.

Jest. Well, Mr. *Sh.* may get his *Quietus est* for all the danger he is in, and Money to boot, if he overthrows *Ben. Harvy*, and so *Exit* Mr. *Sh. Bathel*. But now we are in for stories, have you heard how the Whigs goe a *Rakting* to the Countrey, as well as a *Bulling* in the City; Oh, they are a loving generation of People.

Earn. Not a word, pray let's hear.

Jest. Then Sir, thus; In the Land of *Cyder*, there dwels a certain Lady *Redstreak*, who was grafted into a *Peer*-tree stock; and would you believe it, once upon a time this Lord and Lady would go visit a Brother *Sydrophel*, a true *Protestant Pippin* and a great stickler for the sober *crabs*, the Whigs; as was the Lord oke also, in the two last Meetings of *Dodona*'s vocal Forrests, or the Parliament of Trees.

Earn. Come speak *English* and call a Spade a Spade, I hate your Similes and your Jingles, your Ginger-bread flourishes, as the Popish Couranteer calls them.

Jest. Well then, if it must be so, it must be so, The Lord and Lady being nobly treated at the Squires, at his Palace of *Hampton Court*, stayd so late, that they were obliged to take a Bed there; In the morning the Lord complained he was ill of the Gout. His generous Lady very kindly rose, and told him she would do something to give him Ease; up she gets, and was going down, when the Squire meeting her, took her into a drawing Room, where they two together made a Plaister for the Lords Head, to draw the Gout from his Toes. The Squires Wife, who had for some time before been troubled with the Yellow Jaundice, modishly peep'd through the Key-hole, where she discovered a horrid Shame-plot between the Squire and Lady; up she goes to the Lord, and gives in a Narrative and depositions, and told him, she had broken up the Door and knew the bottom on't. The incredulous Lord took it for a *Sham-Presbyterian Plot*, and in pet called to have his Coach made ready to be gone; when Lo! the Squire had taken the distressed Lady into his protection, mounted her behind him, and away they fled for Religion, and to avoid Persecution. The Lord finding there was something in the Wind, sent out his Servants on Horseback to pursue the Ravisher, and after five days fruitless search, one of his Servants was so fortunate to espy the Squire and Damsel at the Town where the 24 Tinkers were hang'd. The Servant with a Pistol cokt rides up to the Squire, and with a menacing Countenance, bad him deliver his Portmantle, or he was a deadman. The gentle Lady interposed, and by her powerful intercession and Charms, the Squire escaped, and as 'tis said, has retired himself to his Countrey House here in *London*.

Earn. Oh brave Whigs! Who are the *Whoring, Scoring, Dammers* now? and what became of the Lady?

Jest. Oh! she returned into the Arms of her dear Lord, who was glad he had got her again with all his heart.

Earn. And what said the Squire's Lady to it?

Jest. Why truly, she very unduifully in her Husbands ablence broke open his Closet, and found all the Papers of Intrigue Relating to this Plot, which bore date much about the time of the Popish Plot.

Earn. Good Lord! here's plotting and Intriguing; sure we shall have an end on't.

Jest. What do you think on't now, are not these *Sober Party folks*, a Company of very fine *true Protestants*?

Earn. Truly, I think they *Fear God* and *Honour the King* much at a Rate.

Jest. This was only by the way of *uniting Protestants*, you must know, and what harm is there in all that?

Earn. Nay, when Perjury comes to be a matter of Conscience, these tricks of Youth may pass for Frolicks among the Whigs; but their dancing days are almost done.

Jest. Ay, *Michaelmas* day of all the days in the Year was a sad day, they are now for a Composition; Did you see *Dick*'s *Monsieur*, he's for a drawn Battel on't, and *Care* is whistling all the Dissenters into the Church of *England*, we'l have a touch with him for it one of these days.

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